

100% of UK's climate finance diverted from aid budget

It has been revealed that 100 per cent of the government's Copenhagen climate finance pledge has been taken out of the existing aid budget meant for anti-poverty programmes in the developing world.

The World Development Movement has been long critical of the government's pledges for climate finance and international development aid, and has been pressing the government for more information about the small print behind the figures. In an email sent to the group yesterday, the Department for International Development (DfID) admitted that the £1.5 billion pledged would all count as international aid.

This news has been met with condemnation from the World Development Movement which is calling for 'climate aid' to be new money seen as compensation for the climate damage that emissions from rich countries are causing developing countries.

Tim Jones, policy officer at the World Development Movement said:

"The UK government has publicly said 90 per cent of money for tackling climate change should be additional to existing aid commitments. In private, all of the UK's climate change money is being diverted from international aid. The UK has a moral responsibility to put new money into tackling both development and climate change.

"Over half of the money announced by the UK in Copenhagen had already been announced, allocated or spent. At least one-third of it will be loans, increasing unfair debts channelled through the undemocratic and mistrusted World Bank."

The UK government has threatened that only countries who 'sign up' to the Copenhagen Accord will be eligible to receive any money. This is despite the fact that those developing countries who spoke out against the Accord in Copenhagen are demanding stronger action on climate change.

Tim Jones, policy officer at the World Development Movement said:

"It is shameful that the UK government is resorting to blackmail to force through the unjust and ineffective Copenhagen Accord. It is dishonest that the UK backs up this threat by pretending that the money is new, when it has actually already been spent or committed."

ENDS

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Notes to editors

In an email on 25th January sent to the World Development Movement, DfID admits that of the £1.5 billion pledged by Gordon Brown in December:

- 100 per cent is from the already announced aid budget, and will contribute to meeting aid targets. It is not new money.
- Over 50 per cent had already been previously announced and allocated
- At least 33 per cent is loans (the £500 million for the Environmental Transformation Fund).

DfID say the money yet to be allocated will be given "in support of countries that have demonstrated a commitment towards tackling climate change". This seems a reiteration of the threat made by Ed Miliband in Copenhagen that countries need to sign the Accord to get the money

